

THE SAISON FOUNDATION

The Saison Foundation 2026 Grant Awards (April 2026)

TOKYO (April 2026) – The Saison Foundation of Tokyo, Japan, announces grants totaling ¥82 million awarded to the following forty-eight individuals and organizations, in addition to the Saison Artist in Residence program as well as public relations activities and networking related to the grant programs. All grants are for activities taking place between April 2026 and March 2027.

Please note that the information below is based on grant applications as of January 26, 2026, and is subject to change without notice.

1. Direct Support to Artists

1. Contemporary Theater and Dance: **Saison Fellows I / II** (27 recipients: ¥51.5 million)

Saison Fellows I

Two-year grant of ¥1.5 million per year

Newly Selected First-Time Grantees (fiscal 2026–2027)

Takuya Kaneshima (b. 1989) **chocodorobo**

theater



Takuya Kaneshima is a playwright. His work primarily focuses on the history and society of his native Okinawa. In recent years, he has collaborated with public theaters both inside and outside the prefecture, presenting the so-called “Okinawa problem” as an ongoing issue that affects Japan as a whole. His work portrays how power structures between nation-states and histories of exploitation lie behind everyday human relationships, making discernible the distorted nature of historical awareness and international relations that Japanese society faces. Onstage, he questions the strains and deceptions running through society, creating works of theater that take small steps toward dialogue. New plays by Kaneshima will be performed at Naha Cultural Arts Theater NAHArt in October 2026, KAAT in January and February 2027, and Miyazaki Prefectural Arts Theater in March. <http://chocodorobo.com>

Shiori Nakajima (b. 1997) **IHENJI**

theater



Photo: Nanami Miyamoto

Shiori Nakajima is a Tokyo-based playwright, director, actor, and workshop facilitator. Instead of providing answers, she values the responses that lie between herself and others, staging theater works as opportunities to think together about something. Through meticulously written scripts rooted in personal feelings and emotions, and directing that captures the humor of humans who never stop thinking, Nakajima explores the intersection of the individual and society. Her company, IHENJI, also known as the Yowa-ii-ha, views fragility as a space for latitude and wisdom, aiming to encourage mutual understanding among people with different perspectives. In recent years, Nakajima has also served as a workshop facilitator, making safe and secure spaces for participants to enjoy self-expression and creativity. In 2026, she will work on a production for another company, teach workshops, prepare for overseas performances, write a novel, and conduct research and workshops as the groundwork for a new IHENJI production scheduled for spring 2027. <https://iihenji.com>

Shie Minamino (b. 1986) OSUSHI

theater



Photo: manami tanaka

Shie Minamino is a Kyoto-based playwright, director, and costume designer. She views the stage as “a place where anyone can stand should the need arise,” and pursues forms of creating and viewing in partnership with all kinds of places and people. “Through my theater work, I am getting my own back on things I regret,” she says. “By creating my work, I’m revenging and revising. I want to get payback onstage for the things that I want to redo or rethink in my life, not through violence, but by using the power of my work.” Based on this belief, she resolutely re-examines pressing personal issues and presents works that elevate the subject’s life into a social response. In 2026, Minamino’s plans include making a new version of a previous work, *OsuShiEGgypto*, in October with a daughter, mother, aunt, and the voice of a great-aunt. <https://osushie.com>

Shin Hanagata (b. 1995)

performance



Photo: Takuto Ohta

Shin Hanagata is a Tokyo-based artist. In an era of accelerating and intertwined technology and capitalism, and where the very definition of human is uncertain, he explores his own existence through practices that repurpose such media as communication systems and wearable devices to reconfigure our bodily structures and sensory organs. He questions the meaning of the continuing conjoining of body and selfhood when decisions are entrusted to social media, algorithms, and LLMs. Through such works as *Uber Existence*, which questions the existential substitution enacted by the labor of Uber Eats, and *still human*, which seeks out a body with eyes in different places, Hanagata attempts to present a new humanity. In October 2026, he will stage a full performance of a new work, *Ergonomic Embryo*, at the performing arts festival Autumn Meteorite 2026 Tokyo.

<https://www.shinhanagata.com>

Newly Selected Second-Time Grantees (fiscal 2026–2027)

Kayo Masumi (b. 1994) Hate to Cheek

theater



©Kikuko Usuyama by CREA

Kayo Masumi is a Tokyo-based playwright, director, and actor. Their company’s name, Hate to Cheek, is based on Japanese wordplay: the word for “cheek,” *hoppe*, sounds like “hope.” Their work features caricatured portrayals of invisible ruptures between people through outlandish settings and lighthearted conversations. They create theater that incorporates anger at the irrational discrimination that arises amidst hopelessly unchanging situations, and quiet hope for the future. Masumi was shortlisted for the Kishida Kunio Drama Award in 2023 for *In the Glare of Monsters*. Their plans for 2026 include a showcase performance in South Korea from April to May, a revival of *Still, We Are Friends* in Tokyo in June and in Mie in July, plus a revival of *In the Glare of Monsters* in Tokyo in January 2027. <https://hatetochek.com>

Nanako Matsumoto (b. 1992) team chiipro

dance

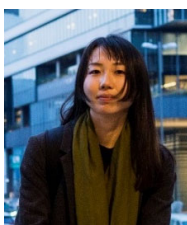


Photo: Shingo Kanagawa

Nanako Matsumoto is a Tokyo-based dance artist. Her artistic practice employs dance as a means of engaging critically with the body. Her recent output includes dance works presented in the form of lecture performances that interweave text readings and dance based on careful research. Objectifying and dealing critically with the body at the intersection of various corporeal contexts, she creates sites for dance to emerge. Her dance works created with Kengo Nishimoto, the co-director of team chiipro, were staged at the 2021 autumn and 2022 editions of Kyoto Experiment, and have since received invitations to appear at other festivals at home

and abroad. Her recent output includes exploring a notion of the “*yokai*body” to describe the choreographic language of physical transformation (shapeshifting) discovered during the research and performance process, with the aim of re-examining female physicality. In collaboration with Anchi Lin (Ciwas Tahos), she created her first international co-production, *Sticky Hands, Stitched Mountains*, staged in Kyoto, Taipei, and Sydney in 2024 and 2025. This is part of an ongoing attempt to envisage a shared commons from queer feminist perspectives. In 2026, Matsumoto’s plans include researching and producing a new work, *Kappa Man*, and continuing to research *yokai* body choreography. In November, she will stage a revival of *Menstruation Sumo Dance* in Indonesia. <https://www.chiipro.net>

Newly Selected Third-Time Grantees (fiscal 2026–2027)

Reisa Shimojima (b. 1992) KEDAGORO

dance



Photo: Toshie Kusamoto

Reisa Shimojima is a Tokyo-based choreographer, director, and dancer who founded the dance company KEDAGORO in 2013. Based on the principle that dance is a means of exploring the world, she employs dance as a method of thinking about society and engages in a practice applying body-centric approaches to frameworks of topical social issues, historical incidents, and controversies about artistic activities. Working both in Japan and overseas, she endeavors to use dance as a way of taking up unanswered social questions and reflecting with others on the complexities of humankind that elude norms and logic. She also aspires to break down people’s indifference through forms of expression

that change their perception of the world. Shimojima’s recent work includes many international collaborations, pursuing through experiences of culture clash what it means to be Japanese and what makes humans human. Her plans include establishing a dance company bringing together artists from across Asia. In 2026, she will stage a new work in Shizuoka in April based on the Hakamata case (a famous miscarriage of justice). Further plans include reviving several other works and completing a multi-city tour in the United States in November.

<https://www.kedagoro.com>

Ayaka Nakama (b. 1992)

dance



Photo: Bea Borgers

Ayaka Nakama is a Hyogo-based dancer. Starting her career as a dancer in various dance, theater, and performance productions, she has recently pursued her own practice, which she creates through a process of wide-ranging research that relies on memories of people and places. Seeking out phenomena impossible to call anything but dance, she makes “mechanisms” for sharing the moments when such phenomena arise with others. She explores ways to expand the possibilities and remit of the profession of dancer, such as by opening a performance and meeting space called house next door

in Shin-Nagata, Kobe, in April 2024. In 2026, Nakama will stage *Hello, I’m Your New Neighbor. (Fly Me to Austin)* in the titular American city in April. She will also continue her research and artist-in-residence program at her studio space, house next door. <https://ayakanakama.studio.site>

Akira Nakazawa (b. 1992) Ayaka Ono Akira Nakazawa Spacenotblank

performance



Photo: Dan Bellman

Akira Nakazawa is a theater maker and choreographer who works with Ayaka Ono. He is based in Tokyo, where he regularly stages work as well as Kyoto and Kanagawa. His current practice involves not only a search for an original style of performance, but a vicarious experience of the processes conceived by past artists, and by seeking to pass that on to future practitioners, he attempts to link up the value of performing and roles in the creative process with history and reality, and to create a new dramaturgy. Aiming

to reform the substructure of the performing arts in terms of creative environment, timescale, budgets, and personnel, he aspires to shape new role models for show business. At Yokohama Dance Collection 2022 Competition I, he and Ono won the Prize of the French Embassy in Japan – Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels for Young Choreographers. Nakazawa will stage a new work, *Ensemble: Dance Piece No. 4*, at Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre's Theatre East in February 2027, followed the next month by his as-yet-untitled most recent collaboration with Shuntaro Matsubara as part of the Iwaki Alios Drama Club Plus project. <https://spacenotblank.com>

Continuing Grants (fiscal 2025–2026)

Yuya Nishida (b. 1993) Gekidan Furosyia

theater



Photo: Shun Ujita

Yuya Nishida is a playwright and director who founded Gekidan Furosyia at the University of Osaka in 2015. Adopting a hybrid style that mixes high and low culture, menace and humor, his plays paint a funny yet grotesque portrait of the warped humanity that lurks beneath the surface of contemporary society. In 2024, he launched Nishibi, an organization to revive and rethink the performing arts scene in Kansai, and is engaged in building alternative networks for the region's theater to reach the national stage. Nishida is the artistic director of Atelier KAIKA and a member of Seinendan. He completed graduate studies at Kyoto University. Alongside his creative output, he is conducting research on the work of British playwright Harold Pinter and others. He won Best Director and the Audience Award at Engekijin Concours 2024. In 2026, Nishida will stage a revival of *Psychic Cypher* in Tokyo and Kyoto in May, as well as tour a new play, *Dark Comedy*, to Toyooka in September, Kyoto in October, and Yokohama in February 2027. <https://www.furosyia.com>

Masashi Nukata (b. 1992) Nuthmique

theater



Photo: comuramai

Director, composer, and playwright Masashi Nukata is the artistic director of the theater company Nuthmique and also heads the music group Tokyo Shiokouji. As a director, his practice is rooted in an exploration of the nature of performance itself. His scripts and directing draw on his musical background to create theater that expands the boundaries of the performing arts. He is known for arranging abstract sounds and language like a musical score that he then transforms into a theater work. Why do we feel moved by just a single word or sound? Taking this question as a starting point, Nukata incrementally directs his productions while considering where to stage the performance, with whom to make it, and what kind of structure to apply. In addition to works for conventional theater venues, he creates outdoor performances and actively collaborates with sound artists, architects, and more. He is recipient of the 33rd Yomiuri Theater Award for Outstanding Director. His company Nuthmique will tour *The Lesson* to four cities (TBC) in January and February 2027, with performances scheduled for venues in Sapporo, Okinawa, Kyoto, and more. <https://nuthmique.com>

Yutaro Murakoso (b. 1991) Scrapbook

theater



Born in 1991 in Tokyo, Yutaro Murakoso is a director and playwright, and the artistic director of Scrapbook. Focusing on inarticulate ways of speaking, he re-examines the modes of behavior that have become habitual or empty formalities to undertake critical and introspective interventions into existing performance spaces. In his recent work, he has attempted to recreate the relationship with the audience from scratch by designing and arranging the audience seating. Murakoso's plays are acclaimed for their myopic writing that functions as both poetry and performance. In 2018, he won the Encouragement Prize at the Toga Directors Competition. His play *Base* (2022) won the 22nd AAF Playwriting Prize. In February 2024, he staged a new work, *Tbol*, at Kyoto Art Center in the style of a tea gathering. In March 2026, Murakoso will open his own space, Na-Ken. After an opening event, he plans to run monthly theatrical activities from June with Na-Ken as his base. <https://sinbunka.com>

Nagara Wada (b. 1987) shitatame

theater



Photo: Yuki Moriya

Nagara Wada is a director who founded the theater group shitatame in 2011. With a strong interest in the act of performing, she aspires to construct a specific performance “grammar” for each work she creates by interpreting the text and motifs as if taking a close-up. Through theater, she engages in dialogue with artists from visual art, photography, architecture, music, dance, and other disciplines, and is actively collaborative in her approaches to her work. Wada serves as a booking coordinator for the multidisciplinary art space UrBANGUILD, and is involved with planning and running projects that are platforms for diverse forms of creative expression and activities related to improving artistic infrastructure in Kyoto, where she is based. In 2026, she will serve as an assistant director of Kyoto Experiment in October. In December, she will stage a new work at ROHM Theatre Kyoto, and a work-in-progress performance at THEATRE E9 KYOTO in March 2027. She will also continue her other activities like a podcast and the dance research project shitatame Dance Club.

<http://shitatame.blogspot.com>

Ayane Nakagawa (b. 1991) Suichu-megane∞

dance

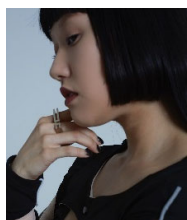


Photo: masataka kougo

Based in Tokyo, Ayane Nakagawa is a director, choreographer, and dancer. Instead of dance purely for art's sake, she aspires to find a creative role for dance within the workings of society through the independent performances and collaborations she plans and produces. Her recent work *my choice, my body*, was highly acclaimed for its attempt to connect traditional folk performing arts and aesthetics with contemporary dance contexts. At Yokohama Dance Collection 2021 Competition I, Nakagawa won the Jury Prize and Prize of the French Embassy in Japan – Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels. Her plans for 2026 include producing an omnibus featuring artists of the same generation as part of a Hokutopia program in August. She will also work on a moving image work with her dance company, Suichu-megane∞.

<https://www.suichumegane.com>

Saori Hala (b. 1988)

dance



Photo: Nanako Kobayashi

Choreographer and dancer Saori Hala's work explores environments, perception, and physicality through multimedia performances that employ light, sound, text, drawing, and her own body. With a background in design theory and ecological psychology, she choreographically reinterprets the experience of perception under specific conditions, and engages with rearranging that in relation to the qualities of both reality and fiction that a performance has. Hala's interdisciplinary practice has recently attracted attention not

only in the performing arts but from also in contemporary art and fashion, and continues to expand the field of dance. As a dance teacher at art colleges, she is also actively involved in popularizing dance through education. Hala's plans for 2026 include an exhibition of the results of her Taipei residency at Tokyo Arts and Space Hongo in August, and a performance with the working title of *P-wave* at KAAT in November.

<https://www.saorihala.com>

Ayano Yokoyama (b. 1987) lal banshees

dance



Ayano Yokoyama is a Tokyo-based choreographer, dancer, and artistic director of lal banshees. In her practice, she explores unique movements focused on Eastern bodily sensibilities. Rooted in the terroir, experiences, and folk mindset of the Northern Alps foothills, where she grew up, Yokoyama unearths sensations and bodies forth dance moments that transcend the boundary between the visible and the invisible. She captures the unseen or often overlooked realities to develop various relationships between sound and physical

movement. In 2022, she was invited to present her work at the Aerowaves Spring Forward festival in Elefsina, Greece. Yokoyama will perform a new work in several locations in Nagano Prefecture as part of Art Share Shinshu from June to September 2026, followed by a performance in Estonia in October, and a performance of another new work with lal banshees for the Yokohama Dance Collection award-winners' shows in February 2027, which she will then stage in a full-length version in Saitama in March. <http://www.yokoyamanaa.com>

Saison Fellows II

Newly Selected Grantees (fiscal 2026–2029)

¥1 million per year

Ema Yuasa (b. 1983) nosmosis Organizing Committee

dance



Photo: Ayumi Fujita

Tokyo-based choreographer and dancer Ema Yuasa spent eleven and a half years with Nederlands Dans Theater, after which she started collaborating as a choreographer with artists from various fields, including architects, fashion designers, and musicians. Since 2022, she has launched research projects open to all participants regardless of dance experience or background, developing activities that emphasize the insights that emerge from flat relationships and encounters with people from all walks of life made possible through the body and dialogue. Together with young dancers, Yuasa uses dance as a starting point to explore different forms of expression and our relationships with society, aspiring to open up

our sensitivity to everyday life and the world by providing opportunities for people unfamiliar with art to participate, and thus reinterpreting our relationships with others and the environment through physical sensation. In 2026, Yuasa will run workshops with both dancers and non-dancers. <https://www.emayuasa.com>

Yuichi Kinoshita (b. 1985) Kinoshita-Kabuki

theater



Yuichi Kinoshita is a Kyoto-based adapter and dramaturge, and artistic director of Matsumoto Performing Arts Centre. With his theater company, he has endeavored to stage kabuki plays in a contemporary style. He works on a production basis without a fixed troupe of actors. He handles the selection of plays and directors as well as the academic research, scriptwriting (adaptations), and dramaturgy, working closely with the director to create the production. In addition to his work with his company, Kinoshita dedicates himself to promoting classical performing arts and developing theater culture

by writing columns, appearing in the media, lecturing widely, and providing scripts for classical performing arts, making the charm of Japanese classics relevant to the present across fields and disciplines. Kinoshita was previously the recipient of a Saison Fellow Junior grant in 2014–15, 2016–17, and 2018–19. In 2026, he will tour a production of *The Love Suicides at Amijima*, written and directed by Yukinosuke Itoi, to nine locations nationwide from the end of June to August. The production will revive a previously staging in a new way that incorporates stage sign language interpretation, surtitles, and audio descriptions.

<https://kinoshita-kabuki.org>

Jang-Chi (b. 1983) OLTA

performance



Jang-Chi is a Tokyo-based director and visual artist. He is a member of the artist collective OLTA, which pursues a multifaceted practice across installation, moving image, and theater that engages with visual and performing arts institutions, and undertakes sociological and folkloric fieldwork. Characterized by its scenography that turns an entire space into a performance venue, it stages outdoor performances and undertakes art projects. Through its work, OLTA focuses on the relationship between collective action and the environment in a society where cities, industries, and various attributes intersect through the process of modernization, and questions the meaning

of fundamental human desires, sensations, aspirations, and creative acts. Jang-Chi was previously the recipient of a Saison Fellow I grant in 2022–23 and 2024–25. He plans to stage work at YPAM in February 2027. <https://olta.jp>

Naoki Sugawara (b. 1983) OiBokkeShi

theater



Photo: Nanako Tomioka

Naoki Sugawara is a playwright, director, actor, and caregiver. Based on the principle of introducing the know-how of theater to care homes and the profound experience of caring for the elderly into theater, he creates performances with the elderly and caregivers as well as runs workshops that incorporate theatrical approaches to caring for those with dementia. He has recently attracted widespread attention for his work that transcends the conventional boundaries of theater and nursing care by applying unique approaches from theater to the issues of the super-aging society. In 2019, he received the Minister of

Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's Art Encouragement Prize for New Artists. He was shortlisted for the 68th Kishida Kunio Drama Award. In 2024, he won the Grand Prize at the 25th Okayama Arts and Culture Awards. Next winter, Sugawara will hold a memorial performance for Okajii, an actor and long-time collaborator who recently passed away. A work-in-progress performance is also planned for October in the town of Nagi, plus a performance in Mie in March 2027. In addition, he plans to conduct over a hundred

sessions of his “Aging and Theater” workshop at theaters, community centers, educational institutions, nursing homes, and hospitals. <https://oibokkeshi.net>

Kaori Nishio (b. 1985) Bird Park

dance



Photo: Nobuhiko Hikiji

Kaori Nishio is a playwright and director whose work questions social divisions, and highlights figures whose existence has strayed from what is deemed “correct.” Defining Bird Park not as an organization for staging theater works but more widely as a place where theatrical processes are generated, she engages actively with making those processes publicly accessible through giving presentations about Bird Park’s activities and finances as well as producing annual reports. In this way, she simultaneously creates theater works and develops creative environments. Nishio was shortlisted for the 62nd Kishida Kunio Drama Award. She will hold work-in-progress performances in summer and autumn 2026 at an as-yet-undecided venue and at Morishita Studio in late February 2027. A play she wrote will also be staged in Tokyo in July, and she will participate in a playwrights’ meeting in Yogyakarta in July and August. In addition, Nishio plans to launch Playwrights House, a facility for playwriting residencies and writing. <https://bird-park.com>

Reina Kimura (b. 1982) 6steps

dance



Reina Kimura is a choreographer and dancer. As a choreographer, Kimura believes that staging works in society as a form of artistic expression leads to a phenomenon whereby choreography and dance are “utilized” while forming connections with various people’s goals, and whereby she leaves behind a dance legacy for generations to come through that interaction and long-term efforts. In addition to performance, she employs exhibition and various other means of presentation to make interventions with her dance works into seemingly unrelated everyday life, and so expands the latent possibilities of dance. Not just a unilateral action that is a personal response to society, Kimura’s dance is developed in collaboration with society and through social responses. Since 2020, she has had a studio called itoguchi in a suburb of Tokyo. In 2026, Kimura will continue running itoguchi and hold open rehearsals and workshops at various locations. In addition, she plans to perform a solo piece *itoguchi* named after the studio as well as *6steps*, her dance piece that uses a wooden set of steps, and conduct research and take part in a residency to create and develop new work. <https://reinakimura.com> <https://6steps.net>

Continuing Grants (fiscal 2024–2027)

¥2 million per year

Kumiko Ueda (b. 1979) projectumī

theater



Photo: matron2023

Kumiko Ueda is a Nara- and Tokyo-based playwright and director. In March 2024, she founded projectumī with the aim of creating critically engaged contemporary theater for wide audiences. A former member of the Takarazuka Revue, she left the company to pursue a more personal mode of practice instead of entertainment. Harnessing her skills with performing in large spaces and comprehensibly conveying complex concepts, her work shares issues with Japanese and international audiences by connecting her personal perspectives with global and universal problems. Her primary concern is developing safe collaboration with others. She will revive her staging of *Hamlet* at the Shizuoka Performing Arts Center in June 2026, and put on a try-out performance of *When Does Time Become Beauty?* (working title) in France in February 2027. <http://www.kumikoueda.com>

Kishodai Kageyama (b. 1988) NORUHA

theater



Photo: Arata Mino

Kishodai Kageyama is a Tokyo-based playwright and director. His company, NORUHA, aspires to create performing arts that result from respecting everyone involved in a production and enabling them to be true to themselves. In 2021, Kageyama founded a joint studio called NORUBA with several other artists. It serves as a place for artists and others involved in making the performing arts to collaborate smoothly through their creative practices. Known for presenting theatrical experiences that incorporate communication with audiences before and after a performance, Kageyama's wide-ranging activities include holding events to accompany performances and publishing booklets. In 2017, he won the AAF Playwriting Prize. In September 2026, he will stage a work-in-progress performance of his latest production, Kobo Abe's *The Ghost Is Here*, at Morishita Studio. <https://noruha.net>

Rom Hashimoto (b. 1995)

performance



The Tokyo-based director, choreographer, and curator Rom Hashimoto's work explores minority politics. Employing conceptual approaches, their highly contemporary performance practice incorporates aspects of pop and street culture. With a firmly developed aesthetic running through all the elements that make up their work, they draw on deep compositional planning that dynamically harnesses the mechanics of a theater space, and collage techniques for delving into a theme in multifaceted ways, forming a style that presents new assumptions. Hashimoto has recently conducted research in Japan and beyond on colonialism as well as trained in Chinese martial arts. They won the Outstanding New Artist Prize at Yokohama Dance Collection 2020. In 2026, Hashimoto will hold a screening of their past work *SYMPOSITION* with a talk, plus do fieldwork on Chinese culture as well as research on Chinese martial arts and action stunts. <https://www.romance-hashimoto.com>

Pink No. 3 (b. 1982) Momochi no sekai

theater



Photo: chanmi

The Kyoto-based Pink No. 3 is a playwright, director, and novelist. A former undertaker, he founded Momochi no sekai in 2015. His work is known for his intensely dialogue-driven plays. Recent output includes *Desert Sea* (2020), *Water Lily* (2021), and the courtroom drama *Terror* (2022), all of which featured sign language. Treating sign language as a form of body art, his work has gained attention for reinterpreting directing in ways that transcend conventional understandings of accessibility. He aspires to create theater that is truly open to all audiences, such as through using deaf actors and incorporating techniques to ensure accessibility, and engages in new efforts in this vein. Pink No. 3 is the recipient of the 29th Tsuruya Nanboku Playwriting Award. As a novelist, he is the recipient of the 47th Noma Literary Newcomer Award. In 2026, he will stage a new version of *An Angel Sleeping on the Clavicle* in Seoul in July as well as a Momochi no sekai production in Tokyo in December, and publish two novels. <https://momochinosekai.tumblr.com>

Yohei Hosokawa (b. 1978) horobite

theater

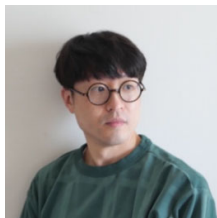


Photo: Yohei Hosokawa

Based in Tokyo, Yohei Hosokawa is a playwright, director, and actor. He has served as artistic director of the theater company horobite since 2010. His work theatrically and indirectly relates the harsh, hopeless predicament into which we have fallen. He shifts styles as befits each work, from Hyper-Colloquial Theater to Theater of the Absurd, examining violence or the people who fall between the gaps of social structures, and emphasizing the process of searching for language while conducting careful research for his work. Premised on the lack of any need to incorporate cause and effect into a narrative or appeal to an audience emotionally, his work is an attempt to maintain a constantly dynamic and changing state. In March 2027, Hosokawa will stage a new horobite production in Tokyo. In addition, he will conduct research in Okinawa and abroad during 2026. <https://horobite.com>

2. Contemporary Theater and Dance: **Sabbatical Program**

2 recipients: ¥2 million

This program awards grants up to ¥1 million to individual artists who wish to travel abroad and encounter intercultural experiences. Applicants must have: (a) a working base in Japan; (b) more than ten years of professional working experience in one of the following occupations: playwriting, directing, or choreography; and (c) plans to travel abroad for more than one month.

Kunio Sugihara (theater)

Taking a Breath in a City where Entertainment Lives and Breathes

Shintaro Hirahara (dance)

Time for Deepening My World

2. Partnership Programs

This category includes programs in which The Saison Foundation provides up to three years of support to individuals and organizations whose aims are to improve the infrastructure of contemporary performing arts in Japan or to organize international exchange projects and thus enhance the visibility of Japanese performing arts around the world.

1. Contemporary Theater and Dance: **Creative Environment Innovation Program**

Grants and the use of studios and guest rooms are awarded to individuals and organizations conducting projects aimed at improving the infrastructure of contemporary performing arts in Japan.

4 recipients / ¥7.45 million

Organization / Representative

Newly Selected Grants

Chizu Community Theatre / Kei Yonei

Building a Cycle of Creation, Experience and Audience Participation in Chizu, Tottori

In response to the lack of creative infrastructures in nonurban areas, the project will hold an artist residency and creative development program in the town of Chizu. Through collaboration with locals and making the creative process open to the public, it will build connections between artists and audiences. It will hold an open call for participants from both Japan and overseas, aspiring to foster a nonresident population through the performing arts and to develop a sustainable foundation for creating artistic expression.

April 2026–March 2027

<https://totto-ri.net/chizu20250721>

Tottori

¥1.5 million

conSept LLC / Wonsup Song

Musical Next Seeds & Critics

In response to a scarcity of venues for up-and-coming artists to present their work as well as a lack of specialist criticism, the project holds joint try-out performances open to the public, and promotes direct matches between artists and audiences. It will launch a website for publishing criticism and build a foundation for daily feedback, creating an environment in which the next generation of talent circulates and grows.

April 2026–March 2027

<https://musical-awards.tokyo>

Tokyo, online

¥1.95 million

Continuing Grants (fiscal 2025–)

Platform Design lab / Tomomi Nakamura

Project to Establish Childrearing Network for Performing Arts Professionals

This project will run a web portal centralizing information on parenting for performing arts professionals as well as hold talks and social events as a means of tackling the challenges of insufficient know-how and knowledge sharing in the industry for working parents, access to theatergoing information for audiences with children, and inadequate platforms for support.

April 2026–March 2027

<http://platform-design-lab.com> <https://koenowa.com>

Tokyo, online, etc.

¥2 million, Morishita Studio

Continuing Grants (fiscal 2024–)

precog co., LTD. / Akane Nakamura

GOOD DIALOGUE LABORATORY: Opening Up the Future Possibilities of the Performing Arts in Inclusive Societies

Against a backdrop of growing interest in social inclusion and sustainability, the creative involvement of minorities in the performing arts opens up new possibilities for the industry. Individuals working in the performing arts will discuss this issue and verbalize the values of their activities. As the culmination of the three-year grant, the project will share its results online and through events as well as publish a report.

April 2026–March 2027

<https://precog-jp.net>

Tokyo, online

¥2 million

2. Contemporary Theater and Dance: International Projects Support Program

1) International Projects Support Program

This program is designed to support long-term international projects by contemporary Japanese theater or dance artists/companies lasting more than two years until completion.

6 recipients / ¥7.5 million (with use of studio and guest room facilities at Morishita Studio)

Newly Selected Grants

orangcosong / Chikara Fujiwara

IsLand Bar – Déraciné Rhizome

The table-based performance *IsLand Bar* will be staged as an international co-production exploring displacement, performed by Asian artists living in Europe. The multi-year project aims to build a platform for diverse talent to come together and collaborate.

May–July 2026

Utrecht, Rakvere

¥1.2 million

HANCHU-YUEI LLC / Momo Sakamoto

Japan-China Contemporary Performance Exchange

Exploring the theme of “our bodies,” the project comprises a residency production and research undertaken primarily in Japan and China, and focuses on physicality and views on nature in the two countries. It emphasizes dialogue and shared experiences, which are developed into performances and lectures. The entire process will be archived in three languages (Japanese, Chinese, and English), sharing with society a new form of exchange across borders.

July–September 2026

Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Shaxi, Dali, Chengdu, etc.

¥1.5 million

Yasuko Yokoshi

dojojiproject

This project engages with the classical Japanese dance drama *Kyoganoko Musume Dojoji* (The Maiden at Dojoji Temple) as a practice of transmission through the body rather than limited to a fixed, reproducible repertoire. Grounded in a form of pedagogy that emerges outside the *iemoto* system, dojojiproject investigates the process of dance transmission and transformation shaped by bodies with different histories and cultural backgrounds. The international initiative reconsiders the nature of dance heritage as what might be called an embodied archive, and explores present-day relationships between body and culture.

May–December 2026

New York, Kyoto, online

¥1.35 million

Continuing Grants

NPO Gekiken / Jun Sugiyama

Old People’s Theater in Japan and Scotland: Exchange and Collaboration

Senior theater companies in Kyoto and Sendai will work with and develop a co-production with Tricky Hat Productions, a performance company in Scotland that makes theater with and about people who live on the margins of society. This year, the project will hold a workshop to select performers in Kyoto and Sendai, and fully initiate this exchange between Japanese and British artists. After creative development and rehearsals in Kyoto, the play *My Hands* will be performed in Kyoto and Sendai.

June 2026–March 2027

Miyagi, Kyoto

¥1.2 million

General Incorporated Association Theater and Arts UEDA / Hirobumi Arai

India-Japan International Co-Production Hagoromo Project by Sahyande Theatre & Sai no Tsuno

This project is an international co-production exploring swan maiden (*hagoromo*) traditions in various parts of the world. Following the premiere at Sahyande Theatre in Kerala, India, the project will further develop this year over the course of rehearsals and discussions among the collaborators, led by director Sankar Venkateswaran. This will flesh out the choreography for *Hagoromo* and

include a performance at Sai no Tsuno.

April 2026–February 2027

Kerala (India), Nagano, online

¥1.35 million

**Yukio Suzuki × Stopgap Dance Company International Co-Production Project
Committee / Yukio Suzuki**

Yukio Suzuki × Stopgap Dance Company International Co-Production Project

In this project, Japanese and British companies will create a new dance work for a wide audience that conveys a real sense of diversity and coexistence, providing opportunities to think about what inclusivity truly is. It will establish the activities of disabled professional dancers in the Japanese dance world. This year, the work will be performed at Strange Seed Shizuoka.

May 2026–March 2027

Farnham, Shizuoka

¥1.2 million

General Incorporated Association / Satoko Ichihara

***Yoroboshi: The Weakling* in the United States**

Based on a bunraku puppet play, *Yoroboshi: The Weakling* was developed and premiered at the Theater der Welt festival in 2023 and toured Europe in 2024. It will next be staged in the United States.

November 2026–January 2027

New York, Chicago

¥1.5 million, Morishita Studio

2) Artistic Exchange Project Program (Designated Fund Program)

Grants and other awards are given to activities and projects by nonprofit organizations outside of Japan that have an ongoing relationship with The Saison Foundation with the aim of making Japanese culture and art better known in their respective countries and areas. (This is a designated fund program; applications are not publicly invited.)

Asian Cultural Council

Asian Cultural Council Japan Grant Program: ACC Saison Foundation Fellows

This grant supports the thirty-seventh year of the Asian Cultural Council's Japan Program, which awards fellowships to Japanese artists, scholars, and specialists who wish to undertake creative work, research, or study in the United States, and to their American counterparts coming to Japan.

¥6 million, Morishita Studio

Volksbühne am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz / Matthias Lilienthal

**Bunraku Reconfigured: Satoko Ichihara at Volksbühne am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz,
Berlin**

This is a collaboration between director Satoko Ichihara and the Volksbühne theatre in Berlin. In October 2026, *Yoroboshi: The Weakling* will be staged to coincide with the premiere of a new work.

Presenting both the new and older work at the same time will offer local audiences a better opportunity to discover Ichihara's artistic vision more fully, deepening international exchange.

April–October 2026

Berlin

¥1.5 million

3. Research Grants for Activating the Next Generation of Artistic Creativity

This grant program was launched in 2020. It supports research and survey activities aiming to propose policies for activating the next generation of artistic creativity.

0 recipients

4. Contemporary Theater and Dance: Flight Grants (Japan-Based Applicants)

This program provides grants to those in Japan in need of funds to travel abroad. Japan-based artists are eligible to apply for grants through the foundation's website in Japanese.

¥1.15 million

5. Contemporary Theater and Dance: Saison Artist in Residence

1. Pilot Program: Supporting Overseas Research

This program supports research projects undertaken at overseas artist residencies and cultural institutions or venues with the aim of boosting the international activities of artists, producers, technicians, and others expected to play leading roles in future international exchange in the fields of contemporary theater and dance.

2 recipients / ¥1 million

Nen Ishihara

Memories of Jane: Overseas Research for Creating a Theater Work

This project involves on-site research about the Jane Collective, an underground abortion support group in the United States, and developing a new theater work that translates that spirit to postwar Japan. Through interviews with former members, collecting materials, and interactions with local theater professionals, Nen Ishihara will learn dramaturgical approaches to the universal issue of reproductive rights and then reflect those in her playwriting.

August–September 2026

Chicago, New York, Iowa City

¥500,000

Kazuki Sugai

European Street Theater Festival Research Project

This project researches performance development, festival management, and intercity partnerships through on-site observation of European street theater festivals. It aims to remove barriers to entry and address the lack of expertise in Japan, building a sustainable foundation for exchange with a view to facilitating international co-productions and overseas dissemination of Japanese works.

June–September 2026

Manchester, London, Barcelona, Aurillac, etc.

¥500,000

2. Visiting Fellows

In order to expand overseas networks for contemporary theater and dance as well as promote mutual understanding, the foundation invites overseas artists and arts managers expected to play important future roles to visit Japan and use Morishita Studio's guest rooms.

3. Overseas AIR Participants

The foundation sends Japan-based artists to participate in residency programs overseas to better understand and discover the circumstances, contexts, and appeals of contemporary theater and dance outside Japan. For Japanese artists expected to play leading future roles in the performing arts, the foundation offers opportunities to take part in foreign AIR schemes with the aim of growing international networks for contemporary theater and dance, and advancing mutual understanding. The program covers travel costs, per diem, and production costs.

6. Public Relations and Networking Related to the Grant Programs

The foundation undertakes public relations activities to introduce its grant programs, grant recipients, and their outputs, as well as networking to improve its grant programs

We would like to express our deep gratitude to the following corporations and individuals for their support.

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